



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Private Bag X1000, Pretoria, 0001

28 November 2012

Ms Phoebe Gerwel
22 Jasmyn Road
Belhar
7493

Dear Ms Gerwel

On behalf of the President's Advisory Council on National Orders, it is with great sadness that we convey our deepest condolences to the Gerwel family over the passing away of liberation, academic and civil society icon, Jakes Gerwel.

Jakes Gerwel was the first Chancellor of National Orders in the new democratic government. He established the first new Advisory Council and National Orders system under President Mandela. Jakes was also a pragmatic leader and a sound administrator. As Director-General of President's Mandela's Office in the first democratic government, he led the civil service with great insight and pragmatism. President Mandela honoured him with the Order of the Southern Cross in Gold, the highest honour that a country can bestow on its citizens, for his contribution to resolving the Libyan crisis.

Jakes Gerwel was a consummate intellectual with an incisive mind and a dedicated political activist. He inspired generations of leaders in intellectual thought as writer, academic and principal of the University of the Western Cape. He encouraged his students to grasp a deeper understanding of universal suffering and universal conditions of oppression, and hence the need for a deeper democratic transformation on both sides.

Most of all Jakes was a family man, with a dry but naughty sense of humour. In many respects he remains an enigma, someone who scaled the greatest heights, but never forgot where he came from - the dusty plains of the Eastern Cape; and never lost his aura of humbleness and dignity.

We pay tribute to a fallen hero as the country mourns this great leader.

Dr Yvonne Muthien
Chairperson
President's Advisory Council
On National Orders